



## HORSE INDUSTRY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

### MINUTES

#### MEETING 23

#### Follow-up teleconference to Meeting 22

Wednesday 25 November 2020

3.35pm to 4.30pm

#### Department of Agriculture, Water & the Environment Teleconference, Canberra ACT 2601

##### Participants

##### Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment

Scott Turner (Chair)	Animal and Biological Imports
Ainslie Brown	Animal and Biological Imports
Tanya Oliver	Animal and Biological Imports
Genie Kim	Animal and Biological Imports
Brydie Hawke	Animal and Biological Imports
Allan Sheridan	Animal Biosecurity
Kerry Daly	Animal Biosecurity
Peter Finnin	PEQ Operations
Tamara Nolan	PEQ Operations
Donna Bennett	Veterinary and Export Meat Group
Tania Ware	Veterinary and Export Meat Group
Annette Miller	Export Reform and Traceability Branch
Daniel Passer	Finance and Business Support
Larissa Arney	Finance and Business Support
Garry Howarth	Live Animal Export Program

##### External

James Gilkerson	Australian Veterinary Association
Chris Burke	International Racehorse Transport/ First Point Animal Services
Cameron Croucher	Equine International Airfreight
Jeffrey Wilkinson	Equine Veterinarians Australia
Ross Kendell	Horse Industry Consultant
Karen Day	Racing Australia
Andrew Small	Racing NSW
Patricia Ellis	Australian Horse Industry Council

##### Apologies

Melanie Latter	Australian Veterinary Association
Grace Forbes	Racing Victoria Limited
Paul Bloodworth	Racing Victoria Limited
Andrew Hamilton	Equestrian Australia
Josh Murphy	New Zealand Bloodstock
Tom Reilly	Thoroughbred Breeders Australia
Kathleen Mullan	Harness Racing Australia
Andrew Kelly	Harness Racing Australia

Meeting commenced at 3:35pm.

### **1. Welcome and apologies**

The Chair for the meeting was Scott Turner on behalf of Wayne Terpstra, who is currently on leave until January. The Chair welcomed the committee and completed a roll call for both departmental staff and HICC members.

### **2. Closed and finalised action items**

The chair read through all closed action items from previous meetings. No issues raised.

### **3. Action Item 3 (meeting 20) – Offshore charging guidelines**

Previous finance representative, Anita Tapper, has left the department and Larissa Arney has taken on a similar though slightly modified role made within Finance and Business Support (FaBS). The draft offshore charging guidelines have not been finalised. Following COVID interruption and the cessation of international travel the department is considering how international travel will be managed in the post-COVID world, including associated costs. The timeframe for advice is still several months away. The current draft will apply until further notice, noting there is currently no international travel.

### **4. Action Item 3 (meeting 22) - Cost Recovery Implementation Statement (CRIS)**

Daniel Passer (FaBS) announced a change in the CRIS process for exports following the funding announcement in the federal budget. The \$120 million funding boost is for investment in export certification over the next four years which will be used primarily for improvements to IT and regulation processes. \$71.1 million will go to supplement revenue which will delay full cost recovery until the 2023/2024 financial year. The investment in IT aims to put downward pressure on export costs so that by 2023/2024 there will be reduced costs to recover. Although prices are frozen at current rates, there will be small incremental increases on 1 July 2021 and 2022 which will be preceded by an interim CRIS detailing costs to be implemented. The first CRIS, released shortly, will baseline what the costs would have been without the funding and cost reductions and then a CRIS will be published at the start of each quarter from there on.

Chris Burke (IRT) asked if costs were currently on hold. Daniel Passer (FaBS) said the next CRIS will be available in the coming weeks, but agreed increases are on hold until 1 July 2021 with a step increase each financial year.

Scott Turner (Chair) asked how consultation with industry was likely to be conducted. Daniel Passer (FaBS) said a number of methods were being considered including a series of virtual town hall meetings, Have Your Say page on the department's website and announcement at industry meetings.

### **5. Action Item 8 (meeting 20) - Progress of NEXDOC**

#### **Action Item 1 (meeting 22) – External Consultation on NEXDOC**

Garry Howarth from the Live Animal Exports (LAE) program reported that NEXDOC, which has all the building blocks for creating the program, will be rolled out on a modular basis with live animals being last and will be ready in the next 12 months. There will then be opportunity for industry input on any issues found with the program. Chris Burke (IRT) repeated the feedback

he provided at previous HICC meetings. He asked that industry input be sought earlier in the process so that developers understand industry's needs and make adjustments prior to the system being finalised. Chris Burke (IRT) reiterated frustrations with the department's limited industry engagement throughout the building phase of IT development.

Garry Howarth (LAE) stated he had no comment to make to Chris, however the NEXDOC team will engage with industry in due course. He will send Chris's comments to the NEXDOC team.

## **6. Action Item 2 (meeting 22) - Updates on new exports legislation**

Annette Miller from the Export Reform and Traceability Branch (ERTB) advised that the draft Animal Rules are available on the department's Have Your Say website until January 2021 (website link recently sent to members) with planned commencement in March 2021. Annette Miller (ERTB) encouraged members to read the draft Rules alongside the Export Control Act, and look at the information sheets available on the Have Your Say website. Consultation is an important part of the drafting process of the Animal Rules and this will be the second round of consultation following a previous 5-week period earlier in the year.

## **7. Action Item 4 (meeting 20) - Consignment scheduling and booking for Mickleham horse compounds**

Tamara Nolan from PEQ Operations (PEQ Ops) announced that engagement with importers for managing bookings into the Mickleham Post-Entry Quarantine Facility for 2021 is progressing. PEQ Ops has been looking at ways to improve efficiencies in the running of the horse compounds and has been working with importers to reserve likely intake periods for 2021.

## **8. Action Item 4 (meeting 22) - Online inductions for grooms attending Mickleham**

Tamara Nolan (PEQ Ops) reported that an online induction package for whole-of-site had been built and that a horse specific package was under development. The first draft has already gone out to industry for consultation and is now being refined in response to feedback with the hope of implementing the package from 2021 onwards.

Ross Kendell (Horse Industry Consultant) requested access to the package and an opportunity to comment given the process is similarly applicable to Approved Arrangement (AA) sites. Tamara Nolan (PEQ Ops) agreed to provide access to members representing AA sites and offered to be the contact point.

**ACTION ITEM 1:** Tamara Nolan (PEQ Ops) to contact Ross Kendell (Horse Industry Consultant) to provide the online induction package to AA site operators for comment.

## **9. Action Item 5 (meeting 22) – Use and availability of nasopharyngeal swabs**

Tamara Nolan (PEQ Ops) advised that the use of the 50cm nasopharyngeal swabs had been implemented from the middle of 2020. The Animal Health Trust (AHT) swabs are no longer available through veterinary suppliers but the manufacturer in the UK has agreed to supply PEQ directly.

Chris Burke (IRT) advised the committee that the AHT had gone into receivership during 2020 and asked about alternative sizes for use in foals and ponies. James Gilkerson (AVA) advised the swabs do in fact come in smaller sizes and it's worth enquiring with the manufacturer regarding smaller swabs that are better tolerated by foals and ponies. James Gilkerson also followed up on the question of the major laboratories receiving the samples. Ainslie Brown (ABIB) advised

ADHP and EMAI are working with PEQ Ops to find a suitable vial and ensure adequate stock is available.

#### **10. Action Item 8 (meeting 22) - Glanders review ABB**

Kerry Daly (ABB) provided an update on the department's glanders policy, which has begun but the draft is not yet ready for comment. ABB has experienced resourcing pressures and competing priorities with unexpected exotic disease trade issues emerging in both horse and dog/cat areas. ABB will advise the committee when the draft is available for comment.

#### **11. Update (paper) and action Items 1-3 – Out-of-session African Horse Sickness (AHS) teleconference**

Kerry Daly (ABB) noted that a follow-up AHS paper outlining the department's actions and engagements on AHS in South East Asia was circulated to HICC members prior to this meeting.

With both Thailand and Malaysia reporting cases of AHS, the health status of adjacent countries needs to be monitored. The department has been in communication with Singapore regarding their AHS surveillance systems. This surveillance is required to maintain OIE recognised freedom from AHS for countries adjacent to a country or zone where AHS is present. ABB assessed Singapore's system, which provided the necessary assurance that Singapore remains free of AHS. Consequently, there is no change to Singapore's approval status for direct imports and transit/transhipments. ABB will continue to work with Singapore to ensure that any biosecurity risk is managed.

ABB recently attended the OIE Regional Coordination teleconferences where updates on the status and preparedness for AHS in South East Asian countries and vector surveillance were provided. The vector has been found in southern China, and Thailand (around Bangkok). No vector surveillance from the Thai peninsula towards Malaysia was presented. The source of the outbreak and the serotype of the outbreak have not been determined in Malaysia. However, Malaysia has reported to the OIE that they have not had any further cases. The Northern Australia Quarantine Strategy (NAQS) presented the recent outcomes of surveillance of *Culicoides* in Australia.

James Gilkerson (AVA) asked for further details on vector surveillance in Australia and Malaysia's sample collection process. Kerry Daly (ABB) advised that further details could be found in the presentations which are expected to be available soon. Once the webinar is available on the OIE website, the department will share the details with members.

Tamara Nolan (PEQ Ops) and Chris Burke (IRT) mentioned that insect trapping had commenced at both the airport (First Point Animal Services AA site) and the Mickleham Post-Entry Quarantine Facility.

**ACTION ITEM 2:** ABB to provide link to the webinar of the OIE Asia Region meeting when it becomes available, which will provide details and the presentations by OIE members on AHS and vector surveillance.

#### **12. Action Item 11 (meeting 22): New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries (NZ MPI) proposed microchip requirements**

Ainslie Brown (ABIB) advised that the department had been in contact with New Zealand (NZ) MPI regarding its proposal to certify horses for export against microchips as the only means of identification. The department expressed considerable concern at this proposal as microchips are not always able to be read safely and efficiently. The department prefers at least two forms of identification to be certified, which promotes efficient and seamless release of horses

following arrival in Australia. NZ MPI does not seem to have progressed its proposal and horses continue to arrive with a minimum of two forms of identification.

### **13. Other business**

Chris Burke (IRT) asked for an update on the piroplasmiasis outbreak in NZ and if the department is any closer to negotiating a new health certificate. ABB advised the department is waiting for NZ to collate and provide the full set of data relating to its outbreak investigation. This will be analysed by the Epidemiology Unit in the Animal Health Policy Branch of Animal Division. If this analysis determines that the surveillance is sufficient to demonstrate country freedom, ABB will negotiate an update to the import health certificate.

James Gilkerson (AVA) asked for an update on tracing and testing of horses now in Australia that were associated with the premises involved in the NZ piroplasmiasis outbreak investigation. Allan Sheridan (ABB) confirmed that horses had been traced but that testing was not complete. Two horses have tested negative. The states/territories agencies and industry groups were consulted and agreed to the process of the handling and testing of horses. ABB expressed thanks to all industry and state authorities involved. The process was helped enormously by voluntary cooperation.

Chris Burke (IRT) raised the issue of the lack of response from state health authorities and the lack of national consistency for importers that need to move grooms travelling with horses into and out of Australia. Inconsistency in state arrangements together with ad hoc changes to state requirements without prior notification or communication makes importation with grooms unworkable. Both Chris Burke and Cameron Croucher (EIAF) contacted the department's COVID liaison to industry to discuss management of grooms. While the matter was raised with state authorities, this issue is under the jurisdiction and regulation of the states. The department conceded that lack of consistency between the states is a significant impediment to a national approach. A lack of Commonwealth constitutional control means that it is impossible to effectively address these issues without the agreement of the jurisdictions involved.

Chris Burke (IRT) and Cameron Croucher (EIAF) stated that they understood that the state holds jurisdiction over human health but were seeking a united Commonwealth front to coordinate responses between the states and the Commonwealth to achieve national consistency in the movement of grooms. Importers noted that when the designated department COVID liaison passes them over to the states authorities the response is inconsistent. Importers said they approached state authorities via a number of avenues such as health, agriculture and sporting ministers' offices but have not received a cohesive response. Industry noted that Border Force is considering grooms as 'crew'; which has been useful but there needs to be better coordination and engagement.

Scott Turner (Chair) asked the secretariat to investigate an appropriate contact and liaison.

**ACTION ITEM 3:** Secretariat to investigate a way forward and/or appropriate contact/liason for industry to assist in national coordination of travelling grooms for imports and exports of horses.

### **14. Close and next meeting**

Scott Turner (Chair) advised that the next meeting is planned for April / May 2021. The secretariat will be in contact with members closer to that time to confirm dates and call for agenda items.

Meeting finished at 4:30pm.

### **Summary of Action Items**

**ACTION ITEM 1:** Tamara Nolan (PEQ Ops) to contact Ross Kendell (Horse Industry Consultant) to provide online induction package to AA site operators for comment.

**ACTION ITEM 2:** ABB to provide a link to the webinar of the OIE Asia Region meeting when it becomes available, which will provide details and the presentations by OIE members on AHS and vector surveillance.

**UPDATE on ACTION ITEM 2:** These presentations are now available at:  
<https://rr-asia.oie.int/en/events/oie-regional-coordination-meeting-on-african-horse-sickness/>.

**ACTION ITEM 3:** Secretariat to investigate a way forward and/or appropriate contact/liaison for industry to assist in national coordination of travelling grooms for imports and exports of horses.

**UPDATE on ACTION ITEM 3:** Following the meeting, further information was received from the department's COVID liaison. The department worked closely with NSW DPI to progress the 'groom' issue with NSW Health during April to September of 2020. As agreed at National Cabinet, the States and Territory governments hold responsibility for quarantine arrangements for people travelling into their States.